



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

January 25, 2024

Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair
Maryland House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

HB142 – Information

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and Committee Members:

My name is John Michael Gudger, chair of the Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) Legislative Committee. I am writing on behalf of MAEO to provide you with information regarding Election Law - Polling Places - Establishing Voter Identity (Voter Privacy Act of 2024)

Presently, Maryland's electoral practice permits voters to cast their ballots without the mandatory requirement of presenting identification cards, unless they are flagged as not active in our pollbooks. While there are no restrictions on the voluntary presentation of identification, election judges request that all voters verbally state their name, address, and month and day of birth. This verbal confirmation serves as a security measure, allowing poll challengers the opportunity to object and question someone's identity.

MAEO recognizes that this bill does not impose a mandatory requirement for presenting identification. Instead, it respects the current practice of not requiring voters to show ID, preserving the voluntary nature of this action. However, this bill provides a means to avoid the built-in security check associated with verbal confirmation and potential challenges to their identity.

Another concern revolves around the inclusion of the term "Voter Registration Card" in HB142. Local boards of elections neither supply nor are required to supply Voter Registration Cards or any form of identification. It's crucial to clarify that while we provide Voter Notification Cards to inform voters about their current polling places and party status, these cards are not valid forms of identification.

The bill is also presented as emergency legislation, prompting MAEO to express reservations. MAEO contends that any significant alteration with potential impacts on us during an election year should be either opposed or modified to come into effect after the imminent 2024 elections.

Sincerely,

John Michael Gudger
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Chair, MAEO Legislative Committee